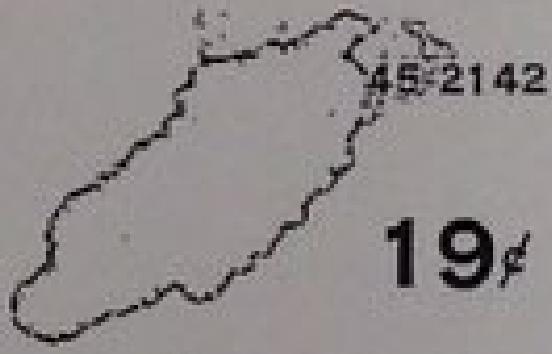
Prof. L Series II #2

the Spiral®

NOTEBOOK



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K2046 N

Series II, #2 (1) (1)

Sept. 8, 1972. Set off on a hike today to [redacted]. Along the way I [redacted] to find old friends growing quite close to each o[redacted] winter cress and miner's lettuce. I haven't seen either of these plants in Montana before. Miner's lettuce I haven't seen since my California days (back in '49, you know). Only found one winter cress plant, so just ate one leaf. Found a fair quantity of miner's lettuce (and enjoyed

eating the leaves, as they
make a very good salad.
Made camp near the source
of the last sizable creek
before willow Creek. Made
a pole lean-to covered with
a plastic sheet, as there
was some threat of rain
(which didn't materialize).
After supper took a hike
up the hill, where I found
a trail which someone
had blazed rather recent-
ly. Heard some elk
squealing and grunting.
Saw a couple of elk
and heard coyotes in the
far distance. Saw a

(2) K2044 N (3)

porcupine, but let it be, because it looked like an old, tough one, and [redacted] have no [redacted] board to chop the meat on. Nice campsite.

Sept. 9: Hiked to the headwaters of Willow Creek, and am camped near one of the streamlets that join to form Willow Creek. Have a very pleasant campsite. Plastic-covered pan-to again, since it has been overcast much of the day (though only a few

drops of rain have actually fallen (as yet) - Wanted to go further today, but my way blocked by tangled deadwood and thickets of saplings. The altitude here is rather on the high side. I have even found some huckleberries. I think I will explore without the packs from this camp.

Sept. 10: Yesterday evening I explored uphill from the camp. I climbed all the way to the top where I found the Dalton Mtn Lookout Station, which

3)

cave is apparently disused. That hilltop is open, with lots of sagebrush. By this time the sun was getting low and I was afraid I would be caught by dark, so I went back by road, running the last part of the way. Got up this morning, had breakfast, and then, just as I was setting out from camp, I spotted a grouse. Not wanting to spend a .30-30 cartridge on it, I went after it with rocks. On the first 2 throws I missed the silly creature

didn't have enough sense to fly very far, so I had a 3rd chance, and hit it on the head. This injured it sufficiently so that I was able to catch it and twist its neck. I cleaned it and plucked it (not a long job, since warm birds are easier to pluck than cold ones) and hung it on a tree with a bunch of leaves over it to keep the sun off. Then I set off on my hike. At the top of the ridge I found a reasonably clear trail leading west

Along the ridge. I followed this all the way to Dalen, into a through pleasant but somewhat monotonous alpine woods. Then back to camp. I a forest service sign I saw is accurate, I covered a good 15 miles, 7½ out and 7½ back. Mostly the going was easy, but I came back pretty tired anyway. Boiled my grouse and 2 to the broth added rice, barley, and I can meat to make soup, which was pretty good. The grouse itself was

superb. It was a small bird — looked like the first grouse I killed here, as far as I can remember. It was extremely tender. Also very tasty. By far the tenderest grouse I have eaten, except for one I killed with a rock 2 or 3 years ago in British Columbia, which was equally tender.

Sept. 11: Got up at dawn. Heard coyotes howling in the distance. The woods seemed so entrancing in the early gray light.

that I set out for a short walk before breakfast. Found a [redacted]ish porcup[redacted] which I killed with a stick and brought back to camp. Then I had pan-cakes and cocoa, then finished patching my pants (I started last night). The weather has been chilly, cloudy, and moist since yesterday and today, but almost no actual rain.

Sept. 12: I intend to get up early this morning, probably before noon, and put the meat in

cold water as it would keep. Then in the early afternoon I set off exploring. Just about this time the sky cleared and there was just perfect autumn weather. Running close by my camp is the trace of some ancient road. It can still be used as a foot-path, but it's not a very good one, because it is choked with fallen timber and in places its traces are not visible. I followed this for, say, 3/4 mile (some of it through particularly attractive open wood)

until I came to the remains of an old miner's cabin and mine-shaft. Here the noise of a chain-saw informed me that some logger was working nearby. I continued until I saw the guy's car, then I turned up the hill to avoid meeting him. Halfway up the hill I found the road on which I hiked for a short distance on the way to this camp. This is a pretty good road which dead-ends a little further up the gulch of Willow creek.

I hiked to the end of the road, then went back to camp. Rather interesting area. About the time I got back to camp, the sky began to cloud over again. I put half a cup of lentils, and the mere smidgeon of rice and barley I had left, in the pot with my porcupine meat, also some sage-brush leaves that I got on my hike, a touch of sugar and salt, and boiled up a good soup. By the time the soup was done it was raining.

(7) Known (13)

and pretty chilly, so that hot broth really was welcome! The liver and kidneys were particularly tender. The rest of the meat was neither tough nor tender — just average. I just ate the liver, kidneys, heart, and hind legs — saved the front legs for today. (I only took the heart, liver, kidneys, and legs of this porcupine — that's most of the meat anyway, and you can get that much without going through the tiresome

process of skinning the whole animal. Of course, I always save all the meat when I'm back at the cabin and have better facilities. Then I had mint tea for dessert (I picked some mint on my walk.) By the time I finished supper, the rain had stopped. Actually, I enjoyed the rain, because it gave a pleasant sense of defying the elements. I kept warm and reasonably dry under my lean-to with a fire in front.

9

I enjoyed sitting up for a while after dark, just watching the fire. About the same time I rolled up in my blankets for the night, it commenced raining again. The night was I think not quite so chilly as the last few nights, and I kept warm and reasonably dry, and slept pretty well, even though I felt rather uneasy about how I was going to cook breakfast the next morning. It rained hard all night with but little

(B) (16)

intermission. And
feared, this continued
in the morning, but the
rain was lighter. All
the same, I got a good
blaze going (one
match, match), but of
course it takes a good
deal more effort to
start a fire under such
conditions. In an area
like this where there's no
birch bark or other
ready tinder, you have
to cut a piece of
sound standing dead-
wood, hack off the
moist outer layer,

and then manufacture a pile of shavings, splinters, and chips from the dry inner part! Anyway, my fire blazed up quite nicely, so I didn't have any difficulty in cooking. I first had cold porcupine, then oatmeal with milk and sugar. Then I rested until the rain stopped for awhile, then I packed up and marched back to my first camp. Here I set up my lean-to — which wasn't much work, because I had the

(b)

(18)

poles already cut from before. Then I had popcorn and cocoa. There has been some intermittent rain here, but also some sunshine. Tomorrow I would like to explore from here in one of 2 directions, but if the weather is too bad I may just get home. In any case I'll be home by day after tomorrow, as my food will be gone by then. And forgot to mention a track I have used several nights on this hike. Heat up socks in your sleeping bag fine, but don't get them too hot to

(10) KZOI6N (10) Aug (F)

touch. Then take them to bed with you. They radiate heat for a long time. Meanwhile, put other rocks on the coals and heap them over with pine-needles, humus, and various moist peaty stuff from the forest floor. This will smolder for a long time, and when your first set of rocks gets cold, you will have a new set all ready and waiting.

Later: Just after I finished making pancakes a couple

of forest rangers, or Forest Service guys, or whatever the hell they are, showed up with shovels and mattocks. They saw the smoke from my fire (earlier, when I had a big heap of wet wood on it drying out) and they came to investigate lest it be an incipient forest fire. They said they spent a couple of hours looking for it. I was afraid they would be mad but they didn't seem to be disturbed in the least. They stayed around for 15 minutes or so chatting.

about my backpack trip and such things. It was interesting meeting them and all that, but it kind of spoils things, because on a trip like this one likes to think that one is out of touch with civilization. Well, after this, when things are wet so that fires are smokey, maybe I will make a point of camping only in deep gulches where my smoke won't be readily visible — but then, it isn't always convenient to camp in a deep

gulch. Shit.

Sept. 13. The rangers coming yesterday rather spoiled things, and besides that, there was a lot of noise of machinery (logging I suppose) coming from the north, so I decided to go home this morning, even though the weather was beautiful. Actually, I enjoyed meeting the rangers, after I got over my initial fear that they were going to be angry, but after they left I felt depressed over the incident. If I had merely met another wanderer in the woods, it

wouldn't have spoiled things. People individually aren't so bad; some of them are even pleasant to associate with. But for me one of the main satisfactions of being out in the woods is getting out of the social machine. What disturbs me is that the agents of the machine may watch my smoke and come to check up on me if I had been thinking of building some kind of a wigwam of bark and poles in the Trout Creek area and camping there for an extended period this fall — but that is very likely.

against the rules (and in any case might excite curiosity or suspicion); and if the Forest Service checks up on columns of smoke as small as those from campfires it might be found out, which might result in trouble and embarrassment. (But then, maybe the gulch of Trout Creek is deep enough to hide the smoke from even a wet campfire — I'll have to think about it.) On the positive side, I enjoyed this trip very well until the last day, and it wasn't too physically

Kodak
(15) oz.

Tiring than my previous trips. Maybe I'm getting used to carrying that pack. Already I am thinking of [redacted] terms of another such trip but where the hell can I go where neither the Forest Service nor anybody else will come to pester me?

Oct. 21, 1972: The deer season opens tomorrow, and I am out to get a deer. I set out yesterday with a pack on my back and my .30-06. I haven't shot the latter since I came out here last year, so I fired one shot from it

(41) (26)

before leaving, to make sure the scope was still properly sighted in. I spent the last couple days in Great Falls. While I was there, I used Dave's oven to bake 8 cakes of whole-wheat-sage bread — or perhaps I should call it hardtack. These I took along on the hike, and also a brick of cheese. [redacted] of the latter are a very welcome addition to my diet. I camped last night in what I have previously called "Diagonal Gulch", at

K2046
(14) one
(27)

my old bank lean-to
there. I have my small
bow saw, and used it
to cut myself pretty
fa[illegible] wood
for [illegible]
b[illegible] backlog
5 [illegible]. This was
not as much work as I
thought it would be. It
was most useful as a
windbreak and in keeping
the smoke out of the
lean-to. I had no
significant smoke problem
I kept a modest-
sized fire going all
night and was very

(27)

(28)

comfortably warm. Today I hiked on to Crafton Mountain, where I expect to hunt when the season opens tomorrow morning. This was an arduous hike. I set up a lean-to in the same spot as before, using the old poles, and added some to the supply of firewood left over from last time. I was glad for nothing but cook, eat, and rest until bedtime.

Oct. 22: Started out at dawn to look for deer. I headed down the gulch

To [illegible] side [illegible]
when [illegible] for [illegible]
hand [illegible] during
su[illegible]hin. [illegible] the
wa[illegible] and a deer
snorting and then saw
it moving around un-
easily. I probably could
have shot it through the
hindquarters (its front
end was hidden behind
some trees) but that
would have strewn its
guts all over its insides,
so I tried to get into a
position for a proper shot
However, it didn't seem
inclined to wait around

for me. So I continued
down to the side-gulch
[redacted] gulch. I found
several deer, but they
were shy and I couldn't
get a shot at them.
I saw a porcupine, but
left it alone, because I
wanted to save my time
and energy for deer.
Came home by a differ-
ent route and saw no
more deer. Unfortunately,
I heard quite a few
shots early in the morn-
ing. Most of these were
fairly far away, but
some asshole Edmo

down the gulch my camp is in, expending ammunition very indiscriminately. I didn't see him, but I could mark his progress by the "bang, bang, bang, bang." Where the hell can one get privacy? Maybe in the wilderness across Route 210, but you can't hike there directly from the cabins. This feeling of not having anywhere where one can get real seclusion is very depressing. But at least I am glad to say that at any

are coming through the gulch would more likely than not miss my camp, since it is in a fairly well-hidden nook. In the afternoon I did a little desultory hunting not far from camp, but saw no more deer. But there are a lot of ravens around here and I saw a couple of them which seemed to be playing with their shadows against the cliffs on Crater Mountain.

Oct. 23: Yesterday morning I saw deer on the hillside, as during the summer, and I noticed that they went over a open ridge at a certain point. I think I saw them go over at the same point during the summer. So this morning I went up there to wait for them at that point, but I saw none. I don't think the came out on the hillside at all this morning — perhaps because of the grim weather

(41) (34)

(cloudy, chill wind).
So I went through the
same gulch as yester-
day, and scared up
one deer, which I
could not get a shot
at. I saw 3 grouse
there which I got
very close to. Also,
on the way to this
camp I saw 2 grouse
which I got very
close to. I wish the
grouse in the gulch
at home were that bold.
On the way back to
camp I noticed some
horse tracks in the

main gulch which appeared to have been made fairly recently. Again, no privacy. Oh for more living room! That hail has turned to snow, and there is a foot or more on the ground. Late afternoon I went out to look for tracks in the snow. I found a deer trail and followed it for some distance. I finally caught up with the deer, but unfortunately not in the open

forest where I had been following it most of the way and where it was possible to walk fairly quietly, but in an area where there were a lot of little bushes that rubbed against my legs and alerted the deer, so I only saw it running away. I kept following it a trail, and it led me to an area not far from camp where there were a great many deer tracks. I saw a couple of deer

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in here but could not get a shot, and had to give up because dusk was falling. I haven't heard many shots since that first morning, and those that I have heard have been far away. When I was tracking that deer I Left one across a road and through open ones visible from Crater Lake Road. Here I felt obliged to put on my orange vest — not for fear of being shot by another hunter, but for fear of being seen by a game

warden; those orange things are now legally required in Montana. That is a law that I strongly resent. Those things look like a neon sign and spoil the woods atmosphere. A person should have the right to take any risk he pleases, as long as he is not risking somebody else's neck — I not that I think there is much risk in this area anyway.

Oct. 24: Despite the snow and cold I have been

keeping warm and sleeping well — with a nice log fire between my lean-to and the rock wall. Clear and sunny this morning. I was out, of course, but saw no deer. The snow is no longer fresh, and I am finding it hard to tell the fresh deer tracks from the old ones. Moreover, there are now many trails all tangled up with each other, so the tracking isn't so good.

Oct. 26: Back to the afternoon of Oct. 24:

I went out again, over
a spur ridge, then down
through that side
gulch where I saw
deer the preceding 2
days. The snow was
now being melted by the
sun, which again made
it easier to distinguish
fresh tracks from old
ones. I was following
the fairly fresh trail
of 2 or more deer,
when down below me
in the gulch I noti-
ced what I might have
taken for an old, dry

gray log had it not been for the 2 ears sticking up. It was a deer laying down watching me. It was not far away — surely less than 58 yards. I could have shot offhand from where I was, but instead I tried to move a couple of steps over to a dead trunk against which I could rest my rifle. As soon as I shifted one foot a few inches the deer got up and ran, and another deer

that apparently had been nearby ran with it. I was able to track these 2 deer down the gulch even though the melting snow was somewhat spotty. I went as slowly and cautiously as I could — but both have sharp ears. One of them ran out onto the open hillside and stopped. It seemed not to be sure where I was (I was behind a brushy tree). I think it was not sure

than 100 yards away. With a scope that is a perfectly reasonable shot. On a Ghost Range I can easily put a bullet in an area the size of a deer's vitals at that distance. But by now, after three days without a clean shot at a deer, I was very nervous and tense. Those who like to use hunting jargon would say I had "buck fever". Anyhow, I couldn't hold the damn rifle steady

it wavered all over the place. I wouldn't have shot without being able to hold steady, but being nervous, I put more pressure on the trigger than I realized, and the thing went off before I was ready. I think and hope that I missed the animal clean — anyhow, it trotted down the hillside without giving any evidence of having been hit. I couldn't find its tracks —

probably it escaped over the dry hillside where the snow was all melted off. Now, it is all very well to be unable to get a shot at a lion, but to mess up a shot in such an embarrassingly incompetent manner was very bruising to my ego. It depressed me for the rest of the day. Another depressing thing was the fact that I found rhinotracks in the snow — evidently

either the same person as before or someone else, had gone through the main gate and knocked again. It wished of course that it could have the whole place all to myself. Now the bride home would resume an overnight stop at the first camp, and I made it only one day's worth of food left, so on the morning of the 25th I was obliged to pack up and start home. It went

Known
(24) area

quietly in the hope of finding deer — and only about ¼ mile from camp I found 2 deer in an open, rocky area (I was among the trees). They were aware of my presence, but apparently were not sure what it was that was moving around in the brush and trees. One deer, at any rate, was curious enough to stand and watch, though it shifted uneasily. I put down my pack and moved

(48)

into a suitable position for a shot. The deer was maybe 50 or 75 yards away — less, if anything. It was much calmer than the day before, and in order to get a suitable shot through the trees, I lay prone, which gave me a good rest in the gun. I aimed and fired. The deer staggered 50 ft or so then fell dead. I had hit it where I wanted to — in the lungs. It was

surprised that the deer didn't fall immediately, and I was also surprised that the bullet didn't go through the animal — at least, I found no exit wound. If a puny cartridge like a .22 long rifle will go through a coyote, you would think a .30-06 would go through a deer. This animal was a doe. Before starting I had debated ~~with~~ whether to wait for a buck with a nice set

of antlers, or just take any deer I could get. But the trophy would be of little importance to me and I didn't want to risk not getting the meat. This was a mule deer (there wouldn't be any white-tails in that kind of terrain). I eviscerated the animal almost immediately. In order to do this I hung it in a tree — but I couldn't get it completely off the ground — the hind legs dragged.